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ABSTRACT

This booklet provides information on one of the most common and underrated problems of childhood--bullying. A study has shown that 15 to 20% of children are involved in bullying once or twice during a school year either as the bullying person or as the victim. The booklet reviews recent research on bullying, discussing who bullies and why, whom they target and why, and outlines the immediate and long-term effects of bullying on perpetrators, victims, the audience, and society. Some low-cost and no-cost action steps are suggested to help caring communities, schools, parents, and even other students or siblings reduce bullying behaviors and build a caring culture. Examples of programs successful in other countries are provided. Age appropriate reproducible information and action steps are included for distribution to youth and concerned adults. (Contains 94 references.) (SLD)

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A YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND REDUCTION SERIES

sticks and stones...

changing the dynamics of bullying and youth violence

BY

KATHERINE J. KOCS, M.S.W.

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challenging the dynamics of bullying and youth violence

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It often precedes suicides, depression, mental health problems, and alcohol and drug abuse. It can potentially lower IQ's and testosterone levels in males. It happens in the industrial countries: Great Britain, Japan, Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United States. It has been outlawed in Sweden since July 1994, and Norway is considering the same action. It is bullying.[1]

What is bullying?

Bullying is the intentional harming or hurting of one person, or their belongings, by another person or persons. Bullying behavior results when a person or group takes advantage of a perceived uneven balance of power to harass another person.

Even though bullying is very similar to other forms of aggression, there can be some distinctive features:

- The aggression is done on purpose
- The aggression is meant to control another person through physical or verbal means
- The aggression is usually just because they see their victim as an easy target
- The aggression is without any real reason
- The aggressor blames the victim for "making him/her do it" or claims that their actions were "no big deal"

Bullying can be a physical act. It can take the form of kicks, trips, pushes, shoves, breaking, stealing or harming items belonging to another. Its purpose can be to make someone feel hurt or powerless.

Or bullying can be verbal. Spreading rumors, teasing, name-calling, insults, coercion and exclusion are also bullying. Bullying can be secretive — done in private — or it can be public.

Dan Olweus, one of the leading international researchers on bullying in schools, gives this definition of bullying:

> "A student is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students. It is a negative action when someone intentionally inflicts, or attempts to inflict, injury or discomfort upon another."[1]

WHO IS BULLIED?

A study of school children shows that 15 to 20 percent of children are involved in bullying once or twice during a school term either as the bullying person or as the victim.[2] Researchers estimate that approximately 9 percent of students in grades 1 through 9, or about 3 million U.S. students, encounter regular bullying by peers.

This may seem like unrealistically high numbers, but a school of 1,000 kids may have twenty bullies. Suppose each bully picks on 10 kids a day. That's 200 children or 20% of the school population that feels miserable about school every day. When children talk about the general climate of a school (what we might call the "ethos") they are in agreement that it is the climate, not policies, makes the difference in feeling safe.

Some research suggests that one child is bullied every 7 seconds in the U.S. and other research suggests a 31 per cent rise in the number of children being permanently shunned by classmates between 1990 and 1992.[8] More and more research is showing that bullying behavior harms everyone: the perpetrator, the victim, and the bystanders.[9]

WHO BULLIES?

People who bully are not anxious or low on self-esteem. Research shows that those who bully are untroubled by anxiety, a necessary emotion for controlling human behavior and for engaging restraint. In fact, because these people are so unaware of what others think they see themselves quite positively. They are blind to the feelings of others, lacking empathy, a deficit that permeates their behavior and perceptions.[8]

Recent research shows that youth who bully generally spent less time with adults, had fewer adult role models, and fewer positive peer influences.[8]

People who bully can be male or female. Despite the assumption that more boys engage in bullying behavior, the rates of aggression are quite similar. 22% for girls and 27% for boys. There are three distinct types of bullying: relational aggression, proactive aggression, and reactive aggression.

RELATIONAL AGGRESSION

While the rates of aggression may be similar, the types of aggression are not. Girls most often participate in relational aggression, although about a quarter of boys will also participate in relational aggression, sometimes in tandem with either proactive or reactive aggression. Studies show however, that more girls are participating in proactive aggression as well.[10]

> Relational aggression is a form of bullying that is relationship-focused, particularly among peers. This type of bullying is illustrated by the youth that manipulates and controls relationships through threats, exclusion, embarrassment, intimidation, and coercion. The relational aggressor utilizes emotional intimacy to blackmail and control others: secrets are told and rumors are started, or the victim's past humiliations or mistakes are consistently employed against them.[11]

Covert bullying may involve writing graffiti or telephone numbers on bathroom walls or near phones, or utilizing sexual innuendo to harass another. Relational bullying may be especially secretive, hidden within superficial social skills. Verbal viciousness and humiliation are two of the tools of relational aggression.

Relational bullying can be considered indirect. The victim may not be directly assaulted, but the aggressor aims to disrupt or manipulate the social status of the victim within his or her peer group. This is done by attempting to change the way others view and respond to the victim.[12]

PROACTIVE AGGRESSION

Youth who participate in proactive aggressive behavior may enjoy harming others; they strike first and appear to have a personal threshold that demands excitement and constant stimulation. They lack anxiety, and may have a paucity of prosocial skills and abilities, including the ability to empathize and understand others' hurts or pain.[12] Because these youth cannot empathize with others, they utilize others for their own gain in calculating ways, oblivious to the hurt they cause. Their bullying is instrumental, simply a tool to get them what they want, when they want it.

REACTIVE AGGRESSION

Individuals who participate in reactive aggression are youth who are responding to a perception of violence or hostility in their environment. These youth are "hot heads," suddenly responding to perceived threats.

These youth are emotionally voluble, always on edge. They swing back and forth between initiating bullying behavior and being a victim themselves. Highly emotional, and easily frustrated, these children lose control and are unable to stop once a fight has begun. Their hysteric responses provide theatrical entertainment for other children.

These are the children that others will pick on and poke at until the victim suddenly charges at them with fists flailing and tears of rage streaming down his or her face. This is the child who has been provoked into responding to others with physical or verbal assault. These are the teens that suddenly shoot or become violent with classmates or commit suicide in front of the classroom.

> At the beginning of the school year, when children do not know each other well, about 22 percent of children report having a victimization experience on more than a moderate level... But by the end of the school year, only 8 percent of kids wind up being regularly singled out by bullies. About half of all kids are victimized at least once a year.[1]

Before ever becoming victims they may seldom initiate any prosocial behaviors, hang back from play, and have passive but rigid patterns of play. These youth may demonstrate these distinct behavior patterns before being victimized.[14]

Many of these reactive aggressors are victims that appear to provoke or seek out the perpetrator, making advances of friendship even though these attempts consistently end in bullying behavior. Some victims are so anxious for acceptance that they continue to initiate activity with the abuser. This type of pattern can be learned through victimization by siblings, where a form of attention may be violence, but at least its attention. These youth often have poor social skills and show passivity and submissiveness.[15]

This anxious-avoidant pattern reflects the child's relationship with their primary caretakers. These youth have experienced patterns of inconsistent responsiveness and rejection. Theoretically, the responsiveness kept them from giving up while the rejection trained them to become victims.[16] Consequently, if a child experiences mainly rejection, they become aggressors, and if intermittent rejection, they are more likely to vary their responses between the role of victim and role of aggressor.

WHAT IS THE EXTENT OF BULLYING?

In 1990, researchers Richard J. Hazler, John H. Hoover and Ronald Oliver, (1993) studied 204 small, rural, Midwestern middle and high school students. Although the communities appeared safe, 75 percent of youth surveyed said they had been bullied. In 1995, 14.5% of students ages 12 through 19 reported experiencing various forms of victimization at school.[17] In 1996, students age 12-18 were victims of about 255,000 incidents of nonfatal serious violent crime at school.[18] In addition, 13.1% of violent crimes and nearly 18% of simple assaults occurred inside school buildings or on school property in 1994.[19]

Is bullying just a school issue? The community itself is not immune from bullying behaviors when youth are out of school. Fifty-seven percent of violent crimes committed by juveniles occur on school days, even though only about half of the days in a year are school days. And one in five violent crimes committed by juveniles occur in the four hours after school.[20]

The effects of bullying? 90 percent of bullied students listed the effects this victimization had on them — a drop in grades, an increase in anxiety, a loss of friends or social life. Middle-schoolers reported the highest levels of bullying.[21]

And bullying isn't relegated to crowded, urban schools.[22] In fact, bullying cuts across all economic levels, and all races, although researchers Bendle and Simon report an increasing rate of exclusion, relational aggression, among black children.[23] Bullying even cuts across all ages.

WHEN DOES IT START?

Bullying can begin in preschool or the early elementary years, and continue throughout life. In fact, it is easiest to extinguish bullying prior to age 8, after that it becomes increasingly difficult to alter the pattern of behavior.[14] By adulthood, bullying is one of the most difficult patterns of behavior to alter.

WHEN DOES IT END?

Those who bully or batter have much in common, so much so that many researchers believe that spousal abuse is simply a continuation of bullying done to one's significant other. The classification of domestic abusers' styles parallels those of bullying youth! Those who batter and those who bully tend to minimize their own aggressive actions.

Battering adults and bullying youth share many of the same behavioral and emotional traits. They blame the victim for their own misconduct. They see hostility where it doesn't exist. Those who batter even fit into what some researchers call the, "Hot-Heads" and "Calculating Cobras,"[15] which parallel the reactive and proactive aggressors of childhood.

Both bullying children and battering adults use the threat of violence or violence itself, and relational aggression or verbal abuse to manipulate and control others. Throwing chairs, striking walls, kicking bikes are all forms of intimidation and abuse: bullies and batterers share forms of physical intimidation as well.

In a 1993 survey of teens, a full quarter (25%) of teenager respondents state they have experienced physical violence in a dating relationship. Some researchers believe the number of dating-violence victims to be higher.[16] For instance, within a ten month period in Massachusetts, 757 restraining orders were filed against teens due to threats, stalking, or assault.[17] Impelled by the Superior Court, Washington D.C. implemented a separate domestic violence program for teens.[18] Increasing numbers of batterers between the ages of 13 and 18 illu·trated the relationships of bullying to dating violence to domestic battery. Both males and females, whether heterosexual or homosexual, can be victims of dating and acquaintance violence.

BULLYING AND TATTLING

Often, those adults who are closest to youth: parents, teachers, or community workers are unaware of the extent of bullying. Even when adults are watching for it, children seek out the dark corners of school, or far corners of the playground in which to assault others.[19] Recent research showed that teachers only intervened in four percent or one out of twenty-five bullying incidents, although teachers thought they'd intervened in 71%. Youth can be very good at hiding bullying behaviors from adults.

One study determined, however, that much bullying occurs in the classroom.[9] By utilizing video recording, there were sixty instances of bullying behavior in 28 hours of video, resulting in an average of bullying in the classroom twice every hour. This bullying was often related to the classroom activity at the time. Bullying behavior often occurred during group work while the teacher was engaged with other students. Rather than students cooperating in their activity, some students were instead badgered.

Relational bullies may pass notes with rumors, whisper a quick comment to a victim, or purposely exclude another child from play or participation. Much bullying can be invisible, unless one is looking for it.[10] Bullying can amount to a child's classmates holding their nose when the child enters the classroom. Bullying can be gestures under the desk at another student, or making a face at a classmate every time they answer a question posed by the teacher. This covert or hidden bullying can effectively interfere with the victim's full class participation.

Unfortunately, bullying in tiny segments of seconds can add up over a day's time to minutes, or hours each week, in which others brutalize a child.

Adults, who would not allow someone to steal something from them, no matter how small, expect youth to accept small thefts or take damage to their property in stride. Adults who would press charges for battery if struck by another adult, suggest that children "ignore" or "stay away" from someone who bullies them.[11]

THE SECRET

The secret to bullying is that it is not acceptable for youth to discuss their victimization. Consequently, they are isolated in their pain and left unprotected.

And in the U.S., children are often admonished not to be "tattle-tales." Yet, research has repeatedly shown that most youth don't share information about bullying, but suffer in stoic silence. Bendle and Simon report that about half of bullied children tell no one about their ordeals.[12] Even when assaults are especially vicious or produce great distress, youth, particularly boys, are embarrassed to "tattle."

Those who bully know that whatever the punishment meted out, it never surpasses the crime. The perpetrator is also aware that the burden of proof lies on the victim.

Victims often fear that teachers will confront the perpetrator, leading to an escalation of victimization. Bystanders worry that they themselves will become victims if their confidentiality isn't honored when adults confront the perpetrator. And those who bully are

well aware of these fears among victims and audience, threatening that retaliation will be swift and severe. Students are also aware that when adults are unable to intervene effectively and efficiently, the ante of violence is "upped." The code of silence is thus put in place.

Unfortunately, some youth may also have other reasons to hide their victimization from adults. In a longitudinal study of 2,400 sixth through ninth grade students in Norway, it was discovered that 2 percent of students had experienced public bullying by a teacher. The study required not just student reporting, but corroboration by at least three other students, the stipulation that there was no provocation by the student, and that the bullying happened at least twice a month over a five month term. Furthermore, ninety percent of these students were singled out by teachers as the only student they bullied, setting them apart from classmates as "scapegoats." These students had difficulty only with that teacher, suggesting that it wasn't general student provocation. An additional 10% of students were included when verbal harassment was the only form of bullying counted.[i] No comparable studies have been completed in the U.S. as of this publishing date.

Bullying is often of a physical nature, and youth who want to really harm someone may strike out at another child's genitals. The embarrassment of the attack may further discourage the victim from sharing their hurt with adults. The Dec. 6, 1995 Journal of the American Medical Association reported that genital assaults, in which another youth harms, or attempts to hurt, a child's genitals by kicking, or other physical assault, may cause great emotional distress in youth.

> Debra Pepler, of York University, Toronto planted a video camera in schools and trained it on the playground, where the kids were monitored by remote microphones. In 52 hours of tape, Pepler documented over 400 episodes of bullying, from brushes of mild teasing to 37 solid minutes of kicking and punching. The average episode, however, lasted 37 seconds. Teachers noticed and intervened in only one out of 25 episodes. The child in the 37-minute incident, says Pepler, is repeatedly kicked and thrown around by two kids (although the vast majority of instances is one-on-one).[ii]

They report that the results of a national survey revealed that about 2 percent of girls and 10 percent of boys suffered a genital assault in the previous year. Boys suffered the most depression and trauma after these assaults, and yet they seldom notified parents or other adults about the assault.[iii]

In 1993, South Australian researcher Virginia Byfield studied bullying in children. Of 5,000 children surveyed in South Australia, she discovered "that most victims would not report

the bullying to teachers. And half wouldn't even tell their parents. 60% looked to their friends for support."[37]

Other studies show that even simple physical assaults can have a long-term effect on victims. Those assaults (for instance shoves or tripping in a hallway) involving neither weapons nor resulting in any physical injury, can result in increasing trauma for the victim lasting up to two years beyond the incidents. Such symptoms of trauma are even more likely if the youth lacks a strong, stable relationship with at least one primary adult.[38]

Clearly, children have been trained "not to tattle," with increasing negative results for those who bully, their victims, and even the bystanders.

EFFECTS OF BULLYING ON PERPETRATORS THEMSELVES

Longitudinal studies of bullies over the past 35 years have shown that aggressors suffer grave economic, emotional, physical and social effects throughout life.[39]

One classic study of bullying behavior by Olweus has determined that boys who are identified as aggressors in grades six through nine have at least one court conviction by age 24.[40]

Continuing longitudinal research maintains that children identified by peers as participating in bullying behavior at age 8 commit more serious crimes and more aggressive crimes as adults. There are more anti-social traits requiring services throughout their life time: higher rates of criminal activity, rates of driving offenses, drunk driving, child abuse, unemployment, alcoholism, and mental health problems. And they are associated with significantly higher rates of spousal abuse.[41] Yet some who bully in childhood may be perceived as popular by their classmates.[42]

Throughout their lifetime, perpetrators utilize more welfare while paying fewer taxes, spending more time in jail, suffering more accidents and illnesses, and living shorter, less productive lives.

By the end of elementary school nearly half of male aggressors are no longer at their age-appropriate grade level. By age 19 their IQ's have fallen, even though most aggressors began their school careers with IQ's comparable to their classmates.[43]

For some who bully, opportunities for school and social success are limited by their aggressive and hostile nature. In essence, some aggressors become "socially retarded" as a consequence of their misperceptions and behaviors, through the social rejection of the school system, peers, and society.[44] Eventually their social deficits translate into economic deficits.

The same bullying behaviors expressed as youth follow them from classroom to workplace, limiting employment, and career success.[13] By age 30, aggressors have greater relationship problems, and interviews with spouses and partners portray a continuing pattern of domestic violence.

Finally, at least one researcher suggests that male perpetrators may experience lower testosterone levels than their less aggressive peers, particularly among "reactive aggressors," who play the roles of both bully and victim.[14] While recent hormonal research has been performed on males, similar studies haven't been performed on girls.

This researcher postulates that testosterone levels among adolescent males may be related to successful social encounters. As youth grow and develop emotionally and physically, social success becomes more and more dependent upon successful verbal and social skills. Perpetrators tend to utilize physical aggression and threats, rather than appropriate communication skills, to control their environment.

By high school, the inability to empathize with others, to communicate clearly through verbal and listening skills, to correctly "read body language," and to accurately interpret social situations regarding hostility, produces "outcasts" or youth who are marginally accepted by mainstream peers.

Emotional, developmental, mental and even hormonal growth may be slowed and distorted in perpetrators through the repercussion of social rejection. In a downward spiral of social and economic class, aggressors are ultimately rejected by mainstream peers, developing relationships with other "aggressors," leading to increasing social marginilization and deviancy.

Aggressors suffer increasing social and economic consequences as the result of the aggressive behaviors. The inability to utilize prosocial skills makes aggressors poor workers later in life, affecting their work histories.

But bullying doesn't end there. Children of adult aggressors tend to become aggressors themselves, through absorption and imitation of the aggressive parent's behavior.[15]

The bully's family often, but not always, reacts to the child by:

- lacking empathy for their child, and not expressing empathy for others
- inattention to their child's social and emotional development
- demonstrating little cooperation in the home

- providing little encouragement to behave in socially acceptable ways, or to develop social values, for instance rather than honesty being an important value within the home, the child is instead taught cynicism. And a child may be taught that it's important to always succeed at any cost
- dismissing the child as unimportant, or dominating the child within the home.

Aggressiveness is often the norm within these homes,[48] and children who are bullied often feel useless. The victimization of a child within the home sets the stage for later victimization and aggressiveness of the child outside of the home.

Children learn to view the world as a "hostile" place whether due to absorbing parental misperceptions, mimicking physical solutions to conflict, or combinations of the two.[49] There is a correlation between childhood victimization and adult abusers.[50] Domestic abuse that is not aimed at the child can still have long-term effects.

Even if youth don't directly witness the violence, they are subject to hearing the screams, cursing, name-calling, and objects being broken. They may view the aftermath of blood, bruises, and even a police officer's arrest of the offending parent. All of these scenarios can result in tension in the home, a tension that's emotionally abusive to the child. This emotional abuse often results in behavioral, emotional, and cognitive problems in the child.

Not surprisingly, children who are both abused and witness the abuse of a family member suffer the most intense symptoms. They quickly learn to anticipate violence, are ever vigilant and become pre-occupied with the violence that demands such a large amount of their mental and physical energy. The number of youth who are estimated to live in homes where a parent is beaten ranges from 3.3 to 10 million youth.[51]

Continuing research on the brain provides insights into the physiological aspects of victimization. Children who are required to be vigilant of their environment become "hard-wired" to be overly vigilant. Attention and arousal are interdependent systems, influencing one another. If the brain is trained to attend to potential danger in the environment, the child cannot attend to other areas of development.[52]

Youth who have been victimized or experienced physical, verbal, or sexual maltreatment by family members suffer significantly higher levels of depression and distress as adults than those adults who were bullied but didn't experience maltreatment by family members. In a cumulative or snowball effect, they also experienced greater depression and stress than those adults who didn't experience bullying outside the home, but were maltreated by family members.[53]

WHO ARE THE VICTIMS?

Children are initially chosen to be victims through their "different-ness" from peers. Children who are not assertive, quiet, less verbal or with fewer leadership skills are often chosen as victims by aggressors. Low self-esteem can also contribute to peer victimization, especially when the youth also demonstrates poor social skills in relation to their peers.[14] Often children with social skills, academic abilities, or an aversion to aggression that are not the norm, become victims. Consequently, the lack of success or "over-success" of a child academically or verbally may put them at risk of victimization. Children who have been raised as victims of abuse within the home, whether directly or indirectly, are also at increased risk of further victimization in the school setting. The child is most familiar with the role of victim, and may cloak himself in it when feeling threatened.

The families of victims seldom, but not always, encourage youth to interact effectively with the outside or social world. Children are not encouraged to develop coping and social skills that are developmentally appropriate for their age, and are often encouraged to only socialize within their family or a small circumscribed social group. These families often do not encourage independence of the child, but endeavor to keep the child dependent on the family circle as long as possible.[15] Not all families of victims are over-protective. Some youth are purposely isolated from their peers and participation in social groups. This is true for the child who witnesses or is a victim of abuse within the home. Isolation of family members provides a cocoon of safety for the perpetrator of violence. This child may already know the "secret" to surviving bullying all too well.

According to Olweus, childhood victims start out more anxious, and may respond to conflict with fear. This fear, often combined with a belief in non-violence, or history of victimization, provides a "vulnerability" to children chosen as victims. Research also shows, however, that kids who were bullied did nothing to provoke the bullying.[16]

Recent research shows that many middle and high school students perceive bullying as an acceptable and instructive way to teach peers "how to fit in" socially.[17] Not only do many of these youth believe bullying is a socialization tool, but that victims "bring it on themselves by being different."[18] Being different doesn't necessarily mean disabled, wearing glasses, of a different religion or race, although once a victim is chosen, these may all become the focus of bullying behavior. Rather, "different-ness" is determined by victims' behavior and the perception of submissiveness by the bully. The physical attributes of victims are simply a pretext or excuse for bullying.

However, those youth who are reactive aggressors are also victims of aggression.[19] Reactive aggressors provide entertainment value for other children, suddenly losing control and

responding in highly emotional and physical ways. The child who is poked by classmates, over and over, throughout the day, may suddenly explode as they are "poked one time too many." The explosion sets the victim up for future confrontations and victimization.[51]

The more victims withdraw as a response to victimization, the more they become picked upon, becoming less and less likable. Victims suffer a multitude of problems stemming from their victimization.

EFFECTS OF BULLYING ON VICTIMS

Research shows that the repercussions of single victimization incidents can last up to two years beyond the attack. Youth who are multiple-victims suffer a variety of distressing effects that severely curtail their potential. Youth may experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress syndrome, including: nightmares, flashbacks, inability to concentrate, increased startle response, depression, and suicidal thoughts.[52]

Research also shows that victims are very lonely and have difficulty making friends. Where their social skills may be quite adequate for developing friendships, the stigma of victimization changes the perceptions of classmates or peers and self. They are isolated by their social status as a victim.

The role of victim becomes set when peers confer the reputation of "victim" to a child. The reputation quickly becomes immutable and peers persist in viewing victims negatively, despite changes in the victim's behavior, attitudes, or appearance. A cycle of subtle victimization grows, victims are affected by peer rejection and negativity toward them, they respond negatively in kind, which is quickly perceived and reinforces the peer's perceptions.[53]

Students who characterize themselves as victims blame themselves for their plight, and experience loneliness, anxiety and low self-esteem. This self-identification as a victim leads to intrapersonal problems for the student. Peers who characterized a peer as a victim also reject him or her. Thus, identification as victim by peers results in interpersonal problems for the student.[54]

Victims, with good reason, become more anxious as bullying continues. It's not surprising that victims learn to hate school. They may experience an increasing fear of school and anxiousness, or develop headaches and stomachaches.[55]

Symptoms of post-traumatic stress syndrome may significantly interfere with schoolwork, creating an atmosphere of failure despite their abilities and effort. They may become underachievers simply because they are no longer able to cope with the multiple demands

from: Walter Houston, *Hit me please!*

Chronic victimization is a three-step process:

1. First, the eventual victim submits to persuasion.
2. Capitulation reinforces the victimizing behavior of peers, who then up the severity of coercive acts.
3. The victim changes in response to victimization. Unless victims learn social skills, they are at risk for behavior problems.[51]

of doing their best schoolwork while protecting themselves from emotional, physical or mental harm.

They may stutter, perspire, or tremble when anticipating school. Flashbacks, exhaustion, insomnia, night terrors, and depression may affect the ability to produce adequate schoolwork. Eventually, victimization affects the youth's grades, school attendance, or attitude. Not surprisingly many drop out of school as soon as they can, or become truant. Their self-perceptions are distorted or destroyed. Regardless of grades, according to Ladd "a disproportionate number of rejected kids drop out of school. These children internalize the very negative views of themselves others hold of them."[52]

Research shows that victimization has a deep effect on youth and their ability to reach their potential economically, academically, socially, and professionally. When victimized youth or those who witness violence, don't receive immediate support and understanding, they are at higher risk of using violence to settle their own conflicts than their peers. Traumatic stress symptoms impair their school success, their ability to develop healthy relationships and to become productive adults. The provision of emotional and psychological help and victim assistance programs for victims themselves, and witnesses to violence, can prevent academic and emotional problems.

Youth who suffer multiple episodes of victimization diverge from non-victims in many personal and academic areas, as a result of their abuse. One study compared victims who had suffered at least 21 bullying incidents within the past 30 days, with non-victims.

Victims of multiple assaults and non-victims had similar values, rating good peer connections, good grades, and safety as important factors in their lives. Victimization, however, retards the

development of the victim. The higher the level of victimization, the less successful a child is at school, community and home, despite the values commonly held with non-victimized peers.[6]

While multi-victims value pro-social traits and goals, they feel powerless to attain them. Depression, suicide, violence, alcohol and drug use, and even murder can result from this disparity.[6]

The overwhelming effect of school victimization can negate the protective factors offered through other avenues within a community. These "victimization effects" are consistent with risk and resiliency research of the negative impacts of exposure to violence or drugs on children.[6]

Other research shows that nearly 58% of students report staying home from school at least once, because they were bullied. In addition, 44% of male teens say they've been slapped, hit, or punched at school.[7]

VICTIMIZATION RISK FACTORS

Risk Factors Related to Victimization[8]	Non-Victim	Multi-Victim
Low Levels of Interpersonal Trust	5.1%	36.1%
Report Hating School	5.8%	28.2%
Low Levels of Perceived Safety	4.1%	69.7%
Suffer Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome	2.4%	20.9%

CO-RELATION OF GRADES AND VICTIMIZATION

Average Grades[9]	Non-Victims	Multi-Victims
A's	33.1%	22.8%
B's	38.5%	34.3%
C's	19.8%	29.9%
D's	6.5%	9.9%

EFFECTS OF BULLYING ON OTHERS

Over 90 percent of episodes involve a single bully and victim... yet, in 85 percent of the episodes of bullying other children are involved in some capacity or as an audience.

In Great Britain a two year old boy was kidnapped by two ten year olds. After dragging the child through the city and hurting him repeatedly, they killed the toddler and left his body on the railroad tracks. Even though numerous people witnessed all the boys together, no one intervened on behalf of the young child, even though they later reported the toddler's distress and injuries. Both ten year olds had been victims of bullying themselves, and by age two, the age of their victim, were already at risk for violence. Often, children who are bullied themselves believe the ethos of society is one of "attack or be attacked, conquer or be conquered."[3]

Bullying is seldom a solitary activity. Because bullying depends upon a show of power, the aggressor most often has an audience. Those who bully often want their "power" to be seen and acknowledged by other youth. An audience assures those who bully that their power over the victim will be maintained, and extends to those who witness the bullying. In the case of young James Bulger, the ten-year-olds had one another as an audience, escalating the violence in an increasing show of power.

Even when bullying occurs within the classroom, most classmates were involved by actively participating or by watching passively.[4] Youth lack the language skills and vocabulary to intervene in bullying incidents. Consequently, even if they want to intervene, they feel powerless to do so. These are the youth that know who the bullies and victims are, but are too frightened to intervene.[5] This group of students makes up the "caring majority" of classmates, 85% of youth. One researcher observes the apparent contradiction that "the more people present, the less likely they are to intervene."[6] Each believes that if something needed to be done, the others would have done it. And each is afraid to act for fear of becoming a victim himself or herself. If it were safe to speak up or intervene, then other witnesses would have done it. The fact that no one else does so is proof enough to children that it is not in their best interests to do so.

Even youth who are well adjusted and pro-social can be drawn into the "bullying scenario." This scenario is the context within which bullying occurs. The relationship between the victim and the aggressor is played out in front of an audience of peers. The scenario played out may excite, frighten, or arouse members of the audience. A Canadian study illustrated the tension of the audience in bullying situations. While most kids stated that they don't condone violence and would intervene if they could, video-taping of playgrounds show many youth are engrossed by the bullying situation. Often these youth are very aroused, egging the bully on, jumping up and down with the excitement. The study concluded that the culture of bullying needs to be altered.[7] The emotional charge may distress some youth while encouraging others to participate in aggression themselves.

For some youth there may be a sense of relief, cognizant of their own different-ness and vulnerability to attack. "At least it wasn't me..." some youth sigh with relief. In a sense, the victim becomes a type of sacrificial lamb for some members of the audience.

For many youth, observing bullying may be as emotion-laden as being the victim, a hodgepodge of excitement, relief, and fear.

"Mobbing" is a kind of bullying in which the barriers between the aggressor and bystanders becomes blurred, becoming audience participation at its worst. In the excitement of the scenario, critical inhibitions against violence are dissolved and personal responsibility for actions is diminished.

The attack of a child by a group of other children, many of whom would never harm someone in a one-on-one situation, is the sort of social contagion witnessed in riots. Carried away by the emotion of the moment, real harm can be done to the victim, but the participant audience may also experience psychological harm from the incident.[*]

Guilt combined with a realization that they are themselves capable of such violence can explode self-esteem and bring about depression. Observing vicious attacks on others can also result in symptoms of post-traumatic stress syndrome.

PEER PRESSURE AND THE AUDIENCE

When discussing the phenomenon of "peer pressure," society may be minimizing the history of bullying scenarios in which youth have been involved. Peer pressure may be rooted in bullying behavior. Bullying, whether victim or audience, may already have trained a youth to succumb to peer pressure. As an audience member, a youth may have felt fear that they may be the next victim in psychological and physical abuse.

In one study focused on why some children bully, 843 boys and 541 girls in the primary grades and 2,158 males and 1,884 females in middle school were interviewed. Many of the respondents believe that bullying other students keeps them from being bullied. And ten to fifteen percent of youth who have been bystanders to bullying behavior agree that the victim deserves it for a variety of reasons.[*]

STUDENTS WHO BELIEVE BULLYING PREVENTS THEM FROM BEING BULLIED

	Males	Females
Primary Grades	27.1%	22.3%
Secondary Grades	35.6%	26.8%

bullying around the world

Bullying is already recognized as a problem in many of the industrialized nations. For example, 10% of Scandinavian children are reportedly chronic victims, with another 10% thought to be bullies. Researchers reported that 23% of students in the United Kingdom experienced bullying during their school years. The figure seems to be somewhat higher in the United States, with as many as 75% reporting victimization and 14% of both boys and girls estimated to suffer severe trauma from the abuse. Increasing rates of mobbing are reportedly occurring in Japanese schools.

Yet four out of five children also expressed admiration for people who take action when seeing someone who can't defend himself or herself being bullied."

The crux of it all is the question, "How to get the majority of children who are bystanders to actively oppose bullying, while negating the influence of the minority of youth who are unsympathetic or antagonistic?" The majority of youth lack the skills and vocabulary to speak up when bullying occurs,[1] and are uncertain that adults will intervene appropriately. Furthermore, when adults don't intervene in bullying situations, youth learn not to intervene, but to ignore.

When a child is exhorted to maintain their own autonomy rather than follow the group, the child is fighting the effects and painful socialization of the past as well as the present.

The audience quickly learns "what not to do" to remain safe within the school or community environment. The aggressor has taught the audience how to act and react by making an example of others. This socialization of bystanders encourages youth to yield to peer pressure, to avoid social condemnation or humiliation by conforming to specific behaviors or dress. For every hour of prevention programming a youth may experience in a formal setting, ten hours (or more) of peer socialization and motivation to avoid victimization may occur. Consequently, the audience itself becomes increasingly vulnerable to social pressures. In this way bullying behavior also undermines prevention attempts by schools and communities. The high-risk behavior of an aggressor can undermine the resiliency factors of many.

For some youth, the threat of violence is a strong deterrent to "saying no." Without adult intervention and protection of victims, the audience is also left to wonder if they will indeed

obvious remedies don't work

The power of reputational factors among peers is so strong that what look like obvious remedies will not solve bullying problems. For example, teaching victims social skills — more assertive and socially competent ways of interacting — is necessary but not sufficient. Their peer's perception still remain the same, and they act accordingly.... studies furnish proof that bullying can be tackled only with a school-wide program.

be protected themselves, especially if they make difficult decisions to refrain from sex, drug, tobacco or alcohol use.

Most middle-schoolers and teens are aware that adults cannot protect them consistently. The individualism that is stressed in maintaining standards of personal behavior, despite "what everyone else is doing," may appear to youth as abandonment.

"Tattling" is an affront to the rugged individualism and personal responsibility that youth are exhorted to achieve, yet these same youth have witnessed the isolation and psychological destruction of their peers.

The role of the audience is to react to the bullying, thereby conferring power to the aggressor. The audience also provides a continuation of the scenario. Bystander responses to the victim and aggressor may be changed or considerably altered. The images of the aggressor and victim become "frozen in time," conferring immutable reputations to each.

Bystander's perceptions of victim and aggressor have been altered, and reputations are unconsciously and negatively reinforced. The sharing of schoolyard stories, passed from student to student, may further enhance the reputation or fierceness of the aggressor.

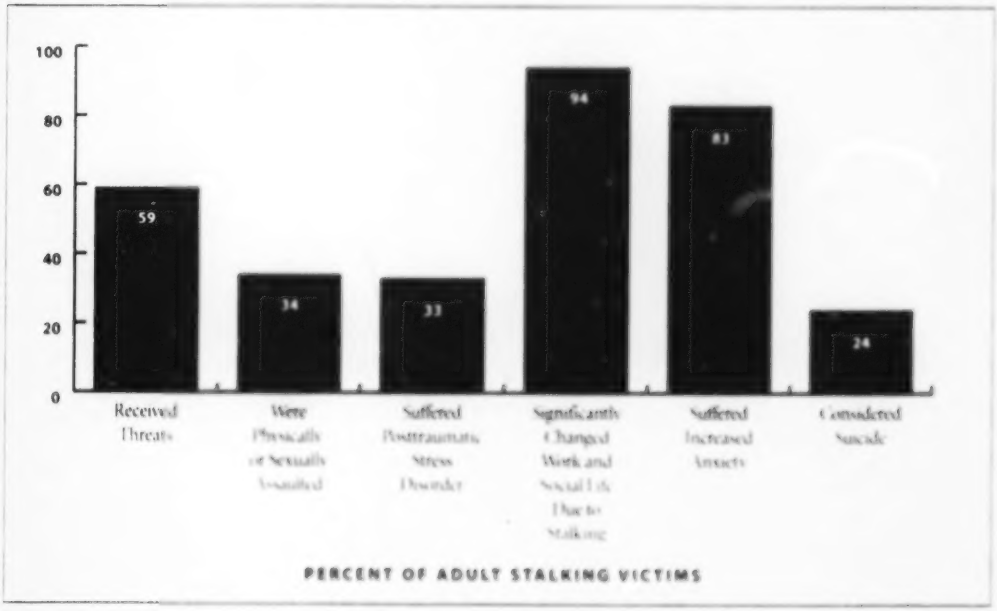
Adults may believe that being bullied or teased is a normal rite of childhood. However, the terms many adults use for the same behaviors directed at them is harassment or abuse.[52]

There is, within the criminal justice system, a set of laws that are called "statutory." That is, certain behaviors are only considered illegal based upon the age of the participant or offender. Missing curfew, smoking cigarettes, truancy and underage drinking are all statutory crimes. These are behaviors that are illegal when a juvenile engages in them. Statutory crimes have been developed to protect youth against themselves and society against their immature judgment.

There are however, no concurrent statutory protections for youth that are bullied. Youth are often expected to accept attacks against their possessions, self-esteem, or beliefs with a kind of acceptance or lack of personal resources that adults have at their disposal.[11] Most youth who are bullied are also stalked. The National Center for Victims of Crime defines stalking as "the willful, malicious and repeated following or harassing of another person." Some states go further in their definitions to include a course of conduct in which the stalker knowingly, purposely and repeatedly maintains visual or physical closeness, or threatens another, whether verbal or written, which serves no legitimate purpose and alarms, annoys, and causes a reasonable person to suffer fear and emotional distress. Anti-stalking legislation makes such behaviors a crime, ranging from misdemeanors to felonies, and varying from state to state. The purpose of such legislation is to eliminate the harassing behavior that disrupts normal life for the victim and to prevent that behavior from escalating into violence and emotional distress.

Yet youth are often "stalked" on the playground, the lunchroom, the bathroom, or in the mall. Youth can be threatened with notes, gestures or whispers. Youth are told to ignore the behavior, or not to worry, since the bully will "be in trouble" if he or she carries through on the threat. But rather than prevent violence, as anti-stalking laws are meant to do, adults in the child's life negate the terror of the victim by waiting to intervene until harm has come to the victim. There is little solace for a victimized youth in punishing the bully after the act.

HOW ADULTS RESPOND TO STALKING VICTIMIZATION



Often youth are expected to work out their conflicts on their own, or are exhorted to "stand up for their rights." Yet youth are provided with few resources and little power with which to "stand up for themselves." Research on adult victims of stalking reveals that 58% had received threats and one-third had been physically or sexually assaulted and one-third suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. In response to the stalking, 94% of victims had significantly altered their social and work lives. Eighty-three percent suffered an increase in anxiety, and one-quarter had considered suicide." What recourse does a child who is frequently taunted, threatened, or maliciously harassed have?

A child who has a small possession stolen or damaged by another child has neither insurance nor the recourse of an adult who is robbed or discovers criminal damage to their property. To have a pair of shoes stolen from a youth by another child may be as traumatic to that child as an armed robbery may be to an adult.

Even if possessions are replaced, the sense of violation and helplessness may remain long after the incident, coloring perceptions of others and self into the future. And when a child's victimization has had an audience of peers, as is frequently the case, the injury to self-esteem is multiplied by the public humiliation.

Relational bullying may be especially difficult to assess. The teen who discovers her phone number has been written in the "guy's bathroom," or the teen who has nowhere to sit at lunchtime, are victims of a profound attack to their self-esteem and self-image. Public humiliation and personal powerlessness further estrange the teen from peers. Incessant reminders by peers of a youth's past humiliations or errors is also relational bullying, even done in teasing.

The court system, rape or sexual assault counseling, battered women's shelters, home and car insurance all provide resources to adults who may be victimized through the purposely-hurtful actions of another. An adult who is struck by another adult may press charges for assault. A child who is struck by another child has no legal protection or recourse, and in some circumstances is admonished for being a tattle-tale, or expected to "talk it out" with their attacker, or "fight back." Often youth are told to ignore it.

While conflict resolution skills are important for all youth to learn and practice, no research has been done to assess the effects of conflict resolution on youth that are suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome or trauma. The term "conflict resolution" also implies that conflict arises from differences of opinion, rather than right and wrong behaviors.

Furthermore, despite conflict resolution skills, leadership training and mental health services for victims of bullying, the audience of peers must allow the image of the victim to change.

Peers are likely to continue perceiving the victim as a victim, despite changes made by the child him/herself. Additional personal support to the child and to classmates is necessary to allow the victim's reputation to change among the school or community.

BULLYING AND GANGS

Over the years there has been much concern regarding youth and gang membership. Organized youth gangs are not limited to large, inner-city areas. Gang membership has become common in suburban and rural communities as well, and membership crosses all racial and ethnic boundaries. A survey conducted by the National Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education, reports that 13.8 percent of American high school students joined a gang during the 1993-1994 school year,[xi] slightly less than the 14.5% of students who reported victimization at school in 1995.

Recent research on bullying provides some insights into who joins gangs and why. A primary attraction for students within the school setting is the ability of gangs to meet student needs for a sense of family and acceptance from peers.[xii]

Some youth who join gangs are proactive aggressors who feel little empathy for others and see gang participation as a form of entertainment. Those who bully often become gang members simply because they have been rejected by pro-social peers.

Youth who are victimized by others, feel isolated and have few friends can be assured a place among their peers through gang membership. Gangs can provide a sense of belonging to alienated youth, as well as offering the protection lacking within the school or community settings.

Bullying results in continued feelings of powerlessness and alienation of youth victims. When adults are unable or unwilling to stem bullying behaviors among students, then victims may view gang membership as the only avenue open to them to gain the power and control missing in their lives. Bystanders or youth who are aware that they, too, are vulnerable to bullying, can also seek solace in the group membership a gang provides. If they join the aggressors, they reason, perhaps they won't become victims.[xiii]

Youth are aware that friendship and membership in groups can provide protection from victimization. Gang membership affords youth with a sense of belonging when alienated, with ready-made friends when friendless or isolated, protection when victimized, and the opportunity to feel powerful instead of powerless.

Recent research of the American Psychological Association (APA) reports that gang members differ from other students in their pro-aggression attitudes, victimization experiences, and willingness to carry weapons to and use alcohol and drugs in school.[xiv]

the only way to end it all...

No matter how perpetrators get that way, there is ultimately only one way to stop bullying: to establish a climate in which aggressive behavior is not tolerated – and enforce it.

If school and community settings are able to establish environments of safety and belonging for all youth, gang membership is no longer needed to fill these roles in student lives. Creating a school climate where every student feels valued is one way to provide a viable alternative to gang membership for victimized youth.

Potential gang members can be found in those who already bully, those who are victims, and those who anxiously watch the interaction of victim and aggressor from the sidelines.

REDUCING BULLYING

Anti-bullying policies at school and community do work! The effects of anti-bullying programs, beginning with those in Norway have resulted in:

- A 50% decrease in bullying within 2 years
- A decline in thefts, vandalism, and truancy in school and community
- More comfortable school climates
- Better order and discipline in schools
- Improved attitudes toward school and work
- More satisfying social relationships
- Dramatic decline in violent behavior among teens

WHAT'S BEEN DONE

In 1982, three children in Norway committed suicide after being bullied. Norway, shocked by the seriousness of bullying attempted to find ways to curb the behavior. Children who bullied and those who were victims were studied. This research provided methods to counter-act bullying behavior.

A national effort to prevent and reduce bullying behavior was instituted. Consequently, bullying in Norwegian schools has been reduced by 50% since 1983.[9]

Evaluations and follow-up research suggest that a consistent, long-term commitment had greater results in changing behavior. It was determined that substantial reductions in bullying were consistently larger two years after programming began than after the first year.

Since school populations turn over on an annual basis, with older students leaving the school and younger students beginning their education, it appears that school change in bullying behaviors is cumulative in nature. Or that prevention is more successful than intervention.

Furthermore, while students expressed more satisfaction with school, other secondary effects were also significant; producing reductions in other anti-social behavior, such as theft, vandalism, and truancy.

how bullying has been reduced in Norway

In Norway, the national campaign to reduce bullying consisted of:

- An educational booklet for teachers, with information about bullying and activities to counteract it.
- An educational folder distributed by schools to all families of students, with information about bullying, school sanctions for bullying behavior, and ways to diminish bullying behavior.
- A videocassette showing episodes from the lives of two bullied children.

Teacher responsibilities were expanded to include:

- Providing adequate supervision at recess.
- Intervening in bullying situations.
- Giving the clear message that "Bullying is not acceptable at school."
- Initiating serious talks with those who bully their victims and their parents.
- Discussing bullying behavior in the classroom.
- Consistently applying sanctions – some form of non-hostile, non-corporal punishment for bullying.
- Providing generous praise for avoidance of bullying.
- Aiding victims in asserting themselves in class to increase other children's respect and affection for them.
- Working with parents of victims to help their children develop new friends.

Scotland also produced an anti-bullying pack

Scotland encouraged teachers and principals to:

- Observe social relationships between pupils
- Keep records of bullying incidents
- Investigate pupils' views by asking them to write a story on bullying
- Discuss potential problems with colleagues
- Ask pupils to write about areas of the school which are safe or unsafe, and what should be done to rectify this
- Carry out a questionnaire survey to learn more about parent, teacher, and student perceptions of bullying.
- Make sure that the information collected from pupils, parents, or teachers is fed back to them and discussed with them
- Act on reports of bullying behavior[30]

PREVENTING BULLYING BEHAVIORS

The entire community, including and especially the adults within it, must take responsibility for making it clear that bullying is an act of violence and will not be tolerated. Any meaningful response to bullying must recognize that a "whole of community" approach is necessary.

WHAT SCHOOLS CAN DO

It's important to include all school or agency staff in the bullying policies of the school or agency. " Janitors, lunch staff, secretaries, and playground monitors often witness acts of aggression that are unnoticed by or hidden from teachers. Provide these staff with the power to report and discourage aggressive behaviors among youth. Include these staff in "special days" or week activities.

Parents and teachers should know what the school's stand is in relation to bullying; the rights of children with respect to bullying in school, the responsibilities of children who witness bullying incidents, and what the school will do about bullying on the premises

The school should have a clear and concise definition of bullying behavior, including illustrations to share with parents and teachers, and an ongoing evaluation of the policy and its effects [32]

WHAT TEACHERS CAN DO

- Work with your class to formulate rules against bullying based on the themes of respect and caring.
- Tie the behavior to the class concern or caring model.
  "In this school, we believe in respect, therefore name-calling is not allowed."
- Discuss bullying in different classes, such as English or reading classes. What kinds of bullying behavior did you see in this book or in this television show or movie?
  1. How did the target character confront the bully? What worked or didn't?
  2. What else could the target have done? What might have happened?
  3. How do you think the characters felt during the bullying?
  4. Why do you think that bully acted the way he/she did?
  5. Where does the bully get his or her power?
  6. What could the people who saw the bullying have done?
- Use "What if..." to present to the children a hypothetical bully situation and have them brainstorm to solve it in non-violent ways.
- Emphasize that everyone deserves to be treated with respect – even the bully.
- Engage older children or teens in developing educational anti-bullying programs for elementary or middle-school students.
- Choose children's books about bullies carefully. Never advocate fighting or revenge.
- Parents and teachers will want to keep records of bullying incidents, including the time, date, and names of children involved, what intervention was attempted, and whether it was successful.
- Remind the child of home and school rules and consequences regarding bullying. Talk to children individually. Never humiliate them.
- Provide activities for youth to learn empathy for others. Volunteer work can offer leadership opportunities as well as practice in empathy.
- Research suggests that when parents of a bully are contacted, half are shocked to learn of this behavior and willingly cooperate with the school. Parents need to know if their child engages in bullying behavior.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

Teach your child not to bully:

- Look for nonviolent ways to discipline your children. If you spank or use physical force when disciplining your children; they will be more likely to use force themselves.
- Provide the tools for your child to learn problem-solving. Help your child to talk out problems, to walk away or to count to ten before acting.
- What are your children watching on television? Know what they watch. Point out good problem-solving and poor problem-solving of the characters to your children when they watch television. Discuss other options the characters had for solving their problem.
- Set a good example. Settle conflicts in your home without abusive behavior.
- Let your child know how special he or she is. Catch your child doing something "good" and let him know how proud you are of him.
- Learn about child development so you know what to expect of your child at different ages.
- Give your child responsibilities within the household. Let your child know that he's an important part of the family. Give them opportunities to help, and thank them when they go out of their way to help.
- Let your child know through both action and words that they are important to you.
- Listen to your child and encourage them to talk about their friends, their days at school or any worries about what their friends may be doing. What their friends are doing may give you an opportunity to see what challenges they are facing.
- Don't allow siblings to bully one another. Expect respect for one another in your home.
- Help your child to learn socially acceptable behaviors and values, such as honesty, generosity, and patience.
- Help your child to learn that other people have feelings, too. And to be considerate of those feelings.
- Teach your child to cooperate with others. Do some tasks or chores together with your child to demonstrate how cooperation works.
- Choose children's books about bullies carefully. Never advocate fighting or revenge.
- Remind the child of home and school rules and consequences regarding bullying. Talk to children individually. Never humiliate them.
- Provide activities for youth to learn empathy for others. Volunteer work can offer leadership opportunities as well as practice in empathy.

a good self image is paramount

Children with self-confidence rarely bully. And youth who feel they are worthwhile human beings, with skills to share, become the leaders of tomorrow.

WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE BULLIED

- Have a system for reporting bullying.
- Encourage all kids — targets and observers — to report incidents.
- Explain that this is not tattling, but information you need to make school safe for everyone. Reinforce that you are committed to keeping targets safe from revenge.
- Let the youth know that it is not his or her fault.
- Explain that you will do all you can to help.
- Help victims develop friendships by teaming them up with more socially skilled students for cooperative projects.
- Teach children to take slow breaths, keep a passive face, and to repeat to themselves, "I can handle this." Teach them to hold themselves with confidence, even when they don't feel it and to "never let them see you sweat."
- Teach all children to be assertive by standing straight, looking the bully in the eye, and saying "Stop bothering me" or "Don't do that. I don't like it." or "I'll report you if you don't stop." Then teach children to walk away.
- Parents and teachers will want to keep records of bullying incidents; including the time, date, and names of children involved, including bystanders, what intervention was attempted, and whether it was successful. Parents can share this information with the school.

SCHOOL-WIDE AND COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

- Make bullying the topic of a school staff meeting.
- Invite a bullying expert to your school or community dinner.
- Share an article or other resource about bullying. Use school and community newspapers.
- So you can better tailor your approach to bullying, have students fill out a bullying questionnaire to help determine how much of this behavior is going on. Keep the public informed of improvements and strategies.

- Inform the community – parents, police, health-care workers, and community leaders – about bullying and its costs.
- Declare your school and community a "Bully-Free Zone" and create clear rules and consequences for it.
- Develop school-wide themes of respect and caring.
- Choose children's books about bullies carefully. Avoid advocating fighting or revenge.

WHAT SCHOOLS CAN DO TO END VICTIMIZATION

- Give all students opportunities to succeed, and recognize their successes.
- Demonstrate leadership skills when working with the bully. Don't bully the bully; you'll only reinforce their misconceptions about using power.
- Teach youth how to feel powerful without making others feel powerless.
- Teach youth to accept responsibility for their own actions. Have them write out what alternatives were available to them at the time; and what different choices they might make in the future.
- Teach youth that every decision is made from choices available to them ... even deciding not to decide is a choice available to them.
- Give meaningful responsibilities to youth. Provide them with opportunities to give of themselves in positive, helpful ways rather than "make work."
- Provide counseling for those who bully and those who are victims. Remember that bystanders can also suffer from witnessing bullying. Provide help to them as well.
- Teach youth to monitor their own behavior.
- Implement behavior contracts with children, providing alternative behaviors such as "When I want to tease _____, I will count to ten instead." (Not before I tease!) Provide rewards for keeping their word in the contract.
- Provide safe spaces for all youth, declaring bully-free areas.
- Encourage strong, positive family relationships.
- Encourage positive relationships among peers, family members, and other adults.
- Teach students about gangs, cults, and hate groups.
- Help youth to identify and manage their anger.
- Promote structured activities and provide supervision.
- Keep the focus on behavior, not the student. – Don't play the blame game.

- Provide youth with badges or other forms of identification that announce their "no-bullying" beliefs and actions.
- Discuss how older students and those younger can be friends to one another. How can older students teach younger ones how to be friends with others and to be assertive rather than aggressive or passive.
- Respect student confidentiality
- Define the difference between tattling and reporting safety concerns.
- Provide tools for parents and community members to enhance their understanding bullying and encourage positive action.
- Educate parents, community and coworkers about both the long term and short term effects of bullying. Remember, those who bully suffer long term social, educational and financial repercussions as adults. When bullying behaviors are not tolerated, you are doing them an important service.
- Do not listen to explanations from those who bully or parents who are contacted about their child's bullying behavior. Reiterate the rule regarding bullying and what the consequences are and follow through on them. The child's behavior is not up for negotiation. Use a matter-of-fact approach with parents and those who bully.
- Expect that changes in bullying behavior will take time, (one to three years), and that once changes are made in community, family and/or school environments, those changes can become permanent as long as expectations are maintained.

Remember, from the viewpoint of young criminal offenders, the school either "passively" condoned bullying or focussed on the "bullies" and "victims" rather than the culture of the school. They believe that the school culture, the actions and beliefs of the "caring majority" determine the behaviors of those who bully."

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP THEIR CHILD WHEN BULLIED

- Keep written records of bullying identifying the bully, any witnesses, the date and time, and where the aggression took place.
- End the secrecy. Tell your child's teacher about the bullying.
- Learn what the school policies are for bullying.
- Provide reassurance. Your child may continue to be afraid since the bully may know or guess that he has shared his victimization with adults. Let him know that it takes courage to share that kind of information and you are proud that he could do it.

- Show him he is loved.
- Emphasize his talents, achievements and special things about him.
- Let him know you will listen when he talks to you, about the good and the bad, and then make an effort to really listen.
- Work with your child's school — Having told the school about the bullying, try to work cooperatively with the school on a plan of action, or volunteer to be a playground parent, or supervise sporting events.
- Let your child's teacher know how things are going. Tell her anything you find out about what has happened. Tell her about any effects you have noticed. You will want to ask her how your child appears in school. Has his work been affected? Is he mixing with other children? Does he appear upset? Has the bullying stopped, or has he just stopped telling you?

CREATE SCHOOL WIDE POLICIES

- Learn as much about bullying as you can, then share that information with others.
- Have a school or community questionnaire to assess how much bullying behavior is going on. Use the questionnaire as a base line for evaluating your anti-bullying policies. Share questionnaire information with students and the community.
- Put bullying on the agenda for school staff meetings, school board meetings, or community meetings.
- Invite a bullying expert to your school.
- Share an article or other resource about bullying.
- Hold school and community meetings or suppers to discuss bullying. Invite all community members and youth from kindergarten through high school. Have the youth plan and develop the meeting. (The Wisconsin Clearinghouse offers a "Family and Community Town Supper Toolkit" for $39.95. Order item 746.)
- Teach others: the community, parents, police, health-care workers, and community leaders – about bullying and its costs to the bully, the victim, the bystanders and society as a whole.
- Declare your school a Bully-Free Zone and create clear rules and consequences for bullying. This includes all staff and teachers. Students are well aware of any adults who bully one another or other students. If the policies don't cover the adults or aren't enforced, youth will quickly discern the inequity and credibility will be lost.
- Teachers and all staff (janitors, lunch staff, etc.) attempt to "catch" kids being kind to one another, giving out "Goodness" coupons to children that can be "cashed in" for prizes, outings or special events, once a certain number are collected.

- Involve all school staff (teachers, janitors, lunch staff, etc.) in learning about bullying and how to intervene.
- Work with bus companies to instruct drivers about bullying and how to intervene. Encourage them to maintain set drivers for each route so drivers and youth get to know one another.
- Develop school-wide themes of respect and caring.
- Make bullying the topic of a school staff meeting.
- Institute a parental awareness campaign conducted during parent-teacher conference days, through parent newsletters, and at PTA meetings
- Provide all parents with a copy of the school's bullying policies at the beginning of the school year.
- Develop school-wide themes of respect and caring. Develop community-wide themes of respect and caring. Be creative and establish a "Who is your neighbor?" campaign on ways people can get to know one another.
- In cooperative activities, place those who bully with older youth to curb their tendencies toward control, and place those who tend to be targets with younger youth, so they can be leaders.
- Have youth list areas of the school or community that feel unsafe for them. Younger children can draw pictures or learn mapping skills by placing pins in maps showing the unsafe areas of school or community. Take this information very seriously. Make changes to make unsafe areas safer.

Research shows that involving the "caring majority" of youth in building a culture of caring, concern and respect is far more effective than more than placing police in schools, implementing metal detectors, providing smaller classrooms, establishing harsher punishments, or separating those who bully from those who don't. Remember, those who bully are habituated to punishment and aren't afraid to escalate violence, but their power is taken away when the culture only allows pro-social use of power.

BULLYING: THE MOST UNDER-RATED AND ENDURING PROBLEM IN SCHOOLS TODAY

- A clear and effective plan for dealing with the bully and the victim must be in place.
- All students must know the consequences for bullying.
- Bullies must be taught how to behave in a socially acceptable manner, and victims must develop friendship skills and learn to interact with assertiveness and confidence.

- The most effective way to deal with bullying is to mobilize the "caring majority" to take action against bullying. Those students have the power to reduce bullying significantly by refusing to watch bullying, reporting bullying incidents, and/or distracting either the bully or the victim.
- Befriending a victim, including them in games or other activities, or being a "playground buddy" can lessen victimization considerably. School personnel must learn to recognize and acknowledge the caring efforts of students who take a stand against bullying.

everyone must be involved

The key to a successful anti-bullying campaign is to involve everyone in working toward a solution. School and communities can build positive, safe, caring environments.

IDEAS & SUGGESTIONS

Respond immediately and effectively to reports of bullying.

When a youth reports a threat by someone else, don't respond with "Don't worry about it, if _____ does that, they will get in trouble." This tells youth that they must be hurt before any action is taken, and that they aren't worth protecting. Instead, the perpetrator may be punished after the fact. There is small satisfaction in knowing your tormenter has gotten a detention while you sport a black eye for the next week.

Another way to view threats of harm to a youth by a bully is by comparing the fear and trepidation of the potential victim to that of an adult who is being stalked by another adult. There are now "stalker" laws and restraining orders that offer some measure of safety to potential adult victims and recognize the importance of preventing harm rather than punishing the offender after the fact. Don't youth deserve the same protection?

Take youth concerns about property damage seriously.

A youth comes to you with a homework assignment marked on by a classmate. The temptation is to say, "Oh, that's just a small mark. Don't worry about it." That homework is the property of the victim, the results of his/her hard work. Any damage, no matter how small, is an affront to their work

While the property of a youth is seldom considered as valuable as an adult's, the effects of deliberate harm are the same. Compare the youth's feelings of those of an adult in a similar situation: After putting in your garden, you find a branch of your prized rose bush deliberately twisted off by a neighbor. Your indignation is justified. It matters little that the rest of the garden was left alone. It matters little that the rest of the rose bush is undamaged. What matters is that deliberate damage was done to your possession, and that is an affront to you and your labors. Again, don't youth and their labors deserve the same respect as those of adults?

One researcher, Sonia Sharp, has studied bullying in schools. It appears that peer pressure to not bully can be instrumental in ending bullying in schools. The passive majority of students who don't approve of bullying needs to be mobilized. Establish ways for students to intervene when bullying occurs." Set safe procedures for students to intervene or report bullying.

ACTIVITIES FOR COMMUNITIES

- Involve community, schools, agencies, parents and students in discussion of how to prevent bullying behaviors.
- Talk about bullying
- Name bullying behaviors
- Share stories about bullying

  Seeing others being bullied (no names of bullies or victims) & how it made one feel.

  Time when you were bullied, how it made you feel.

  Time when you hurt someone else, how do you think they felt?
  What could you have done differently?

  Did you ever see anyone stop someone from bullying them?

  Things you can do if someone tries to bully you.

  Things to do when you see someone else being bullied.
- What are ways you can keep from being bullied?
- Are there ways you can stop someone from bullying you?
- Share stories of courage

  What is courage?

  Can real people have courage? How?

  Who are people with courage?

  Do you know anyone with courage?

  Have you ever helped someone even though it was scary?

  What kinds of things can people do to show courage?

  How can you practice courage?

  Does it take courage to be different?

  Does it take courage to help someone who is different?

  Does it take courage to be friends with someone who is different?

  Does it take courage to tell adults when someone is being hurt?

  Does it take courage to tell someone "No, I don't like that."

  Does it take courage to hurt others?

  Does it take courage to scare others?

TEACH FRIENDSHIP SKILLS

Many who bully lack the ability to make friends or keep friends. Many who are victims also have trouble making friends. Friendship is a critical area of social development. Without friendship skills and understanding, isolation, loneliness, depression and anger become daily companions. Teach those social skills to all youth so they can form positive groups rather than gangs. Simply providing group work doesn't build friendship or cooperative skills. In fact, group work can often exacerbate bullying within the classroom.

- Teach youth how to join in games with others.
- Teach youth how to give and receive compliments.
- Teach youth to recognize strength in character of others.
- Teach youth how to ask for or offer help to others.
- Teach youth how to listen to one another.
- Teach youth to share.
- Teach youth to be concerned about others.
- Teach youth what power is and how to use it to help community.
- What is respect?
- What is power?
- What are the differences between respect and power?
- Does someone need to have power to have respect? Why or why not?
- If someone is afraid of you, do they respect you?
- Are fear and respect the same thing? Why or why not?
- Would you rather someone be afraid of you or respect you? Why or why not?
- How does someone gain the respect of others?
- How can someone lose the respect of others?
- What is self-respect?
- Can you lose self-respect? How?
- How can you keep self-respect?
- How can you help your self-respect to grow?

RULES REGARDING BULLYING: WORKING TOGETHER

Set rules regarding bullying. These rules can be within the home, the classroom, the community center, or the community at large. Let parents, students, and the community set the rules regarding bullying behavior. Community forums are excellent places for these discussions to take place.

Make certain that adults also follow the "no-bullying" rules, including all teachers and staff.

- What behaviors will the be considered bullying in your community or classroom?
- How will bullying behavior be reported to teachers or other adults by victims? By bystanders?
- How will the community or students define the difference between tattling and reporting bullying behaviors? Some schools use boxes into which students put their concerns regarding bullying behaviors. These memos allow students to remain anonymous.
- When and how will those who bully be dealt with? Is it agreed that parents will be contacted by the observer? By a teacher? By law enforcement? Or someone else? Are there procedures for how parents or caretakers will be notified? By letter or memo? By phone call? By home visit? How will bystanders and victims know that action has been taken? Make certain that sanctions for bullying behavior are well defined and publicized. Be consistent in always following procedures for punishing bullying behaviors, no matter who is involved in the bullying actions.
- Teach students how specific language for telling those who bully to stop. Some examples are: "Leave *victim* alone. Teasing him/her isn't funny, its hurtful." "We don't believe in hurting others. We want you to stop." "Didn't you hear *victim* tell you to leave him/her alone? Now we're telling you to leave him/her alone."
- Teach students ways to intervene in bullying situations to protect or support the victim. Some examples are: "Come on, *victim*, we want you to play with us." (Or walk with us. Or sit with us. Or eat with us.) "I'll go with you to tell an adult."
- Teach students ways to prevent bullying of others (ie. including potential victims in their groups, in recess activities, walking home with them, meeting them before or after school, reporting threats).

IDENTIFY ROLE MODELS

- Who do they respect, and why (real people only)?
- How do those people fit into the community?
- Are there things that they do that make them special? What makes them special?
- How can you become more like them?

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- Are they leaders?
- Are there different kinds of leaders?
- What makes a good leader?
- Can good leaders lead others into doing bad things?
- Do you think that once someone is a leader they're always a leader?
- Teach leadership skills and provide opportunities for students or youth to utilize them. Leadership strengthens the self-esteem and builds confidence in those who have been victims. Leadership also provides an alternative area in which those who bully can direct their need for power.

WHAT CAN BE DONE IN THE CLASSROOM

- Reward cooperation.
- Keep grades private rather than posting them or announcing them.
- Lessen competition within the home, school, and community by honoring effort rather than "wins."
- Celebrate examples of character strengths as they are displayed.
- Elevate integrity, or honesty or other values to the level of sports leaders.
- Teach assertiveness skills to all students.
- Work together to problem solve.
- Send clear messages about bullying behavior.
- Encourage witnesses to speak up or act.
- Get witnesses to provide peer pressure against bullying.
- Act immediately.
- Break the code of silence. Bullying is not to be tolerated any more than domestic violence.
- Watch your own actions and words for signs of bullying.
- Do you always call on _____ with an exasperated or angry tone to your voice? Sometimes the tone of voice, pitch, or how you use a student's name can label a student without any verbal bullying taking place.
- Play "what-if" to help students to problem-solve positive solutions to challenges.
- Identify bullying behaviors in TV shows, and discuss them. Keep logs of bullying behaviors in the media.

WHAT SCHOOLS AND YOUTH PROGRAMS CAN DO:

Teach friendship across gender lines. Let both genders learn to respect the other since future relations with the other sex is often developed in the younger grades. Is it "natural" for the boys in your school to scare the girls? To tease them? To call them names? To hit them or jostle them? Is it okay for the girls to call the boys names? To taunt them? Because boys often pick on both genders during elementary and middle school, these actions can teach boys that it is okay to bully or abuse girls. Girls may also learn not to "tattle" on boys who bully them. These patterns can have consequences for later relationships between the sexes. Research shows that the first dating experiences of youth most often determine later relationship patterns. When both genders feel comfortable in friendship with one another, there is less mystique involved in choosing dating partners, and greater expectations of friendship in relationships, rather than sex alone.

Teach positive self-talk for students. Can they identify their own strengths and assets? What are they? Encourage them to keep "WIN" folders with work they are proud of; kind things others say about them; who they can go to for encouragement when they aren't feeling good about themselves. They can keep awards, notes of appreciation, or lists of what others see in them in these folders. Provide each youth with a large sheet of paper with his/her name on it. Have other students each write something about that classmate, telling what that classmate is "good at" or something positive about that classmate. The writers should sign their statements. Hang these "How Others See Me" sheets on the wall so all can see themselves as positive, good people. Have them keep their "How Others See Me" sheets in their "WIN" folders.

Teach leadership skills.

- Provide opportunities for youth to help others, not as a punishment, but because they have a skill or ability that can be of real use to someone else. Have them reflect on their experiences as helpers or volunteers.
- Get parents together to discuss bullying issues, without naming names. How can parents provide support to one another?
- Provide alternative activities to gangs that emphasize "belonging," companionship, new skills, or enrichment for all youth.
- Encourage students to learn more about different values and who demonstrates them in their own lives.
- Give them opportunities to succeed and recognize their successes.
- Demonstrate leadership skills when working with the bully. Don't bully the bully; you'll only reinforce their misconceptions about using power.

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- Teach youth how to feel powerful without making others feel powerless.
- Teach youth to accept responsibility for their own actions. Have them write out what alternatives were available to them at the time, and what different choices they might make in the future.
- Teach youth that every decision is made from choices available to them. Even deciding not to decide is a choice available to them.
- Give meaningful responsibilities to youth. Provide them with opportunities to give of themselves in positive, helpful ways rather than "make work."
- Provide counseling for those who bully and those who are victims. Remember that bystanders can also suffer from witnessing bullying. Provide help to them as well.
- Teach youth to monitor their own behavior.
- Provide safe spaces for all youth, declaring bully-free areas.
- Encourage strong, positive family relationships.
- Encourage positive relationships among peers, family members, and other adults.
- Teach students about gangs, cults and hate groups.
- Help youth to identify and manage their anger.
- Promote structured activities and provide supervision.
- Keep the focus on behavior, not the student. Don't play the blame game.
- Provide youth with badges or other forms of identification that announce their beliefs and actions.
- Discuss how older students and those younger can be friends to one another. How can older students teach younger ones how to be friends with others and to be assertive rather than aggressive or passive?
- Respect student confidentiality.
- Define the difference between tattling and reporting safety concerns.
- Provide tools for parents and community members to enhance their understanding of bullying and encourage positive action. Educate parents, community and coworkers about both the long term and short term effects of bullying. Remember, those who bully suffer long term social, educational and financial repercussions as adults. When bullying behaviors are not tolerated, you are doing them an important service.
- Expect that changes in bullying behavior will take time, (one to three years), and that once changes are made in community, family and/or school environments, those changes can become permanent as long as expectations are maintained.

WHAT BROTHERS, SISTERS AND FRIENDS CAN DO

- If you are a big brother or sister, or a close friend to someone who is being bullied, you may know about it long before any other adults. What can you do to help?
- If the person being bullied asks you not to do anything, it might be because they are afraid they will be hurt worse or bullied more the next time.
- Help the person talk to an adult about the bullying. Offer to go with them to tell. Sometimes having someone that you trust with you can make something that's difficult much easier to do. Or, offer to talk to an adult about the bullying for them.
- Let the person who is being bullied know you will listen to them and care about them. Encourage them to talk to you about what is happening.
- Let the bullies know that you are determined to see them stopped. Let them know you will not be bullied and will not allow them to continue bullying. But don't use violence against the bully or you may end up the person in trouble. You might be accused of bullying the bully.
- Discuss the issue of bullying with student groups, community groups or in class discussions. Bring up the subject at your place of worship, sociology classes or service groups.
- Try to get lots of people involved in ending bullying. Make sure that the teachers and guidance counselors know there is bullying happening.
- Share the information with adults.
- Let the person being bullied know that they were brave to tell you about it and let them know you care. Let them know you will help them.

USE "C A R E"

Care means:

- **Creative Problem Solving** with the target of the bullying. What can they do to lessen the bullying? What choices do they have to avoid becoming a target?
- **Adult Help**. Get adult help, even if the target doesn't want it. You don't want the person bullying to think you don't care if they bully. You do want them to know that you will go to an adult in authority.
- **Relate and Join.** Let the target of the bullying know that you will be there for them; to walk them home; to intervene in bullying; to continue to problem solve; to be their friend. The more people are with or alongside the target of bullying, the less chance the target will be bullied.

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- **Empathy.** Let the target of the bullying know that you care about how they feel. Let them know you are concerned for them and know how hard it is to be bullied. Tell them about times when you were afraid or bullied.

(from Components of the Bully-Proofing Program by Garrity, et al, Intervention in School & Clinic, Mar 97, Vol. 32 Issue 4, p235)

WHAT OLDER STUDENTS CAN DO:

- Pay attention to those younger than you. Do you see signs of bullying? Are they playing "keep-away" from another youth? Are they pushing against one child in the group? Purposely harming another child? You may be able to separate those bullying from the youth being bullied. Let school staff or other important adults know that bullying was taking place, so they can act on the information.
- Provide a role model for those younger than you. Remember that your actions really can have an effect on others' lives.
- Offer honest praise when you notice someone else acting out of respect or concern for others.
- Encourage others to take a "No Bullying Allowed" stance in your school or community.
- Learn more about conflict resolution and develop increasing leadership skills.
- Encourage others to practice creative problem solving, and strive for solutions where there are no losers.
- Become a mentor, "Big Brother," or "Big Sister" to someone younger than you. Research shows that "Big Brothers" and "Big Sisters" do make a large difference in young people's lives, building resiliency to face other challenges.

WHAT SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY CAN DO:

- "Random Acts of Kindness and Senseless Acts of Beauty" days, when all school or community members perform anonymous or unrewarded acts of kindness.
- Provide opportunities for each child's skills, talents, abilities, or interests to "shine."
- Celebrations of "Good Citizenship" or "Being Our Own Heroes" with an emphasis on empathy, kindness, compassion and assertiveness, not aggressiveness.
- School-wide "No Bullying Allowed" policy. Include parents and youth in the development and implementation of the policies determining consequences and remedies bullying behavior.

- "Secret Sharers" ... anonymous notes of encouragement and praise for all children, by classmates and staff.
- Establish a "Youth" or "Teen Court," in which juries of peers and youth judges determine the penalties and remedies for engaging in "bullying behaviors."
- Conflict resolution skills training and programming for youth.
- Guide youth to identify developmental assets in themselves and others, and to utilize them to problem solve.
- "Standing Together," listing ways in which youth will show support and respect for peers, using positive language. You may make posters, fliers, or bulletin board displays; run a contest with positive or supportive ways youth can deal with bullying behavior toward others; or artwork depicting ways in which they can "stand together."
- Provide communication and leadership skills training, for victims and those involved in bullying behavior.
- "Friendship Classes"–special class in being a friend and social skills practice for all students.
- Provide ongoing counseling for victims of bullying behavior who may be suffering the effects of trauma.
- Allow reactive aggressors a place in which they can quietly "pull themselves together" before rejoining a group (i.e. a quiet room, a cardboard spaceship in a corner of the room, a "student lounge" or other quiet space).
- Provide some alternate physical activities to curb aggression for proactive aggressors, before they engage in bullying behaviors (i.e. punching bag in the gym, running around the track, trampoline, etc).
- Encourage children and teens to seek adult protection if they are being bullied. Everyone has a right to feel safe. Never belittle a youth or teen for being afraid of someone else; take their fears seriously.
- Encourage everyone to find an area in which they can experience success or become an "expert." Then provide the resources for success to happen.
- Guide youth to perceiving prior "victims" as competent individuals.
- Encourage and celebrate diversity.
- Teach children to give and receive compliments in culturally appropriate ways.
- Educate parents and youth about the long-term effects of bullying behavior to the aggressors, victims, and bystanders.

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HELPFUL ORGANIZATIONS

National School Safety Center
4165 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Westlake Village, CA 91362;
(805) 373-9977

Bullies and Scapegoats Project, Educators for Social Responsibility
23 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138;
(617) 492-1764

Institute for Families in Society, University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208;
(803) 777-5510

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